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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RS](#) [PL](#)  
SUBJECT: POLAND SUPPORTS RESTARTING OF EU-RUSSIA  
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT TALKS

REF: STATE 115017

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR DAN SAINZ FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)  
)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. An MFA official told us November 12 that the GOP had shifted policy and now supported the November 10 EU decision to re-initiate negotiations with Russia on a new partnership agreement, despite Russia's failure to meet its commitments in Georgia. The official denied press reports that Poland dropped its objections to talks with Russia in exchange for EU concessions to Warsaw on carbon emission ceilings. He argued that the EU would have a stronger position in talks with Russia than individual countries engaging Russia bilaterally. Nevertheless, the MFA was disappointed that the EU did not attach a roadmap of conditions that Russia would have to meet before talks resumed. Regarding Georgia, the official argued it was unrealistic to expect Russia to meet the terms of French President Sarkozy's cease-fire agreements and withdraw its troops to pre-invasion positions -- in his view, Russia's recognition of the "independence" of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and related troop presence there are likely irreversible. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Jaroslaw Bratkiewicz, Director of the MFA's Eastern Policy Department, adamantly denied press reports that Poland dropped its objections to talks with Russia in exchange for EU concessions to Poland on carbon emission ceilings. In a November 12 meeting with Poloffs, he gave three arguments for Poland's support of the EU decision to re-engage with Russia on a new partnership agreement: 1) the EU is more interested than Russia in negotiating a new partnership agreement because such an accord would address hot-button issues, such as human rights, democratization, and market access; 2) it is better to have a common EU position than to allow Russia to negotiate with individual EU members (i.e. Nordstream experience); 3) the EU can best exert pressure on Russia by engaging in dialogue. From France's perspective, Bratkiewicz said, there was a danger the upcoming Czech and Swedish EU presidencies would not seek to engage Russia, hence the urgency of starting the talks again under the French presidency. Bratkiewicz expressed disappointment that the EU did not accept the Polish request to put explicit conditions on resuming the talks, particularly a condition that would grant EU monitors access to Georgia's breakaway territories.

¶3. (C) Bratkiewicz said he attended the GAERC meeting, which avoided discussion of Georgia. He stated that the EU had been presented with a "fait accompli" by Russia. It would be unrealistic to expect Russia to meet the terms of the Sarkozy cease-fire agreements and withdraw its troops to pre-invasion positions since Moscow's recognition of the "independence" of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and the related troop presence there, are likely irreversible. He added that Russian troops were critical to support the "puppet states" in the two breakaway provinces.

14. (C) Regarding the Russian proposal for a pan-European security treaty, Bratkiewicz described the EU mood as "skeptical" and said Russian President Medvedev had not elaborated on the concept. Bratkiewicz speculated that it might be Russia's effort to strike against the OSCE after Moscow's proposal to create a security council in the OSCE had been rejected. He emphasized that Poland and the EU would not agree to dismantle the OSCE or NATO despite Russian calls to eliminate "Cold War institutions." Nevertheless, Bratkiewicz appeared sympathetic to Russia's desire for more influence within Europe's security structures. He noted that the NATO-Russia Council did not address Russian concerns about Europe's security architecture because the Council was not a decision-making body.

15. (C) Bratkiewicz told us that Sarkozy's invitation to Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk for a November 13 meeting reflected Warsaw's increasingly important role in the EU. Bratkiewicz said Tusk would emphasize that Poland wanted the EU to establish clear "rules of the game" for the relationship with Russia and to raise concerns related to human rights and energy supplies.

16. (C) COMMENT: The Poles may have concluded that they could not oppose the determined French push for a November 10 GAERC approval of restarting the partnership agreement talks with Russia. Lithuania's decision to block consensus has had little effect; nor would a second no-vote by the Poles have had one. Warsaw may have calculated that a principled dissent would only irritate the majority in favor of moving forward on the talks. As PM Tusk told the media, President Kaczynski's joint declaration with the Lithuanian President

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against resuming the talks could jeopardize other Polish EU goals. Although Bratkiewicz denied a quid pro quo between Polish support on the talks and more lenient EU emissions ceilings for Poland, the Sarkozy meeting with Tusk on the eve of the November 14 EU-Russia summit is a tell-tale sign of how much the EU presidency values Polish cooperation regarding the engagement of Russia. Presumably, Tusk will expect that Polish "reasonableness" will be rewarded.  
SCHILLING